

World Rowing Governance Working Group 2021-2024

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Members:

- Annamarie Phelps, Chair
- Jean Christophe Rolland
- Tricia Smith
- Vincent Gaillard
- Ron Chen
- Algirdas Raslanas

Facilitated by Lucy Trochet, Ludovica Caprino and Pat Lambert

Objective of GWG:

To propose and prepare any updates or changes to Statutes, ByLaws and Appendices for consideration at the 2025 Quadrennial Congress.

Today: to highlight significant or material changes to the statutes being proposed and gain approval for the proposals to be presented to the Quadrennial Congress in March 2025.

Methodology and priorities.

The Statutes and Bye-laws were reviewed over a series of meetings, taking into consideration...

Comprehensive review of Statutes and bye-laws

- Typos – tidy up
- Inconsistencies in language and grammar
- Language - update
- Relevance to current practice
- Modernise language and methods used
- Add clarity
- Ensure compliance with new laws, rules and guidelines
- Inconsistencies with existing WR policies or appendices
- Re-order clauses and reduce repetition

Input from:

- Executive Committee
- Council
- Commissions
- Rules Working Group
- Recommendations from ASOIF Governance Review
- Basic Universal Principles of Good Governance [BUPGG]
- IOC guidelines
- Member Federations

Articles with substantial or material changes, or new articles/clauses being proposed (1/14)

- **Art 2 Principles of Rowing**
- This section has been removed as a separate clause and merged with WR's Principles of Governance.

Why?

To simplify, modernise and reduce repetition, and ensure that the Statutes are relevant to the organisation and our evolving sport.

Articles with substantial or material changes, or new articles/clauses being proposed (2/14)

- **Art. 4 – No Demonstration or Propaganda**

Updated wording to reflect a more helpful approach in line with IOC Charter Rule 50. The ExCo will define where at WR events athletes may express their opinions.

Why?

In the current environment athletes' freedom of expression is considered a right. Other governing bodies and events have updated their approach to allow athletes the opportunity to express their opinion, whilst being accountable for what they say, in specified areas such as mixed zones, press conferences and social media.

The Executive Committee is working on a guidance document, which will be available ahead of Congress.

Articles with substantial or material changes, or new articles/clauses being proposed (3/14)

- **Art. 10 – Members**
Adding clarification in line with UN and IOC. Ensure clarity that only one rowing federation per nation/territory.
- Also recognition by NOC will be required for new member applications.
- The NOC has a better understanding of the local situation and is also required to recognise MF elections under Art 13.4

Why?

It is recognised that some NOCs prefer IF recognition first however this can be achieved by coordinating recognition.

One option could be to include an additional proposal:

‘Where local laws or practice require IF recognition first WR may recommend a new MF to the Congress subject to subsequent recognition by the NOC within an agreed time frame.’

Articles with substantial or material changes, or new articles/clauses being proposed (4/14)

- **Art. 11 – Autonomy of Member Federations**

Updated to include a requirement to meet the IOC's Basic Universal Principles of Good Governance. It allows WR to intervene if principles diverge significantly and may cause harm to individuals or the reputation of the sport.

Why?

To ensure MFs keep their statutes up to date in good governance to protect the federation, their members and athletes. WR does not have the resource to manage every MF statutes but may ask for clarification or act where needed.

Articles with substantial or material changes, or new articles/clauses being proposed (5/14)

- **Bye Law to Art. 13.1**
- To introduce a joining fee which also covers first two years subscription.
- If the admission is unsuccessful no refund would be due.
- This impacts Art.35 Voting at Congress with a reduced period before a new MF can vote.

Why?

Proposed to (a) support the cost of managing and administrating the application process and (b) to ensure compliance with Swiss law which requires a fee for membership to be paid.

Articles with substantial or material changes, or new articles/clauses being proposed (6/14)

- **Article 14.2.2a Admission to Membership**
- An additional obligation to make a copy of the MF's Statutes available to World Rowing or any of its legal constituents/members if requested.

Why?

World Rowing does not keep a copy of the most up to date statutes for each MF, and does it have the capacity to monitor updates to each MF's statutes. However, they should be published on the MF website or where that is not possible they should be easily accessible to its members and to WR if there is a wish to refer to them.

Articles with substantial or material changes, or new articles/clauses being proposed (7/14)

- **Art. 18.7 – Continental Rowing Confederations**
Additional clause to align Continental Federations with MFs whereby they may be sanctioned if breaching Statutes.

Why?

To hold Continental Confederations to the same level of accountability as the MFs.

Articles with substantial or material changes, or new articles/clauses being proposed (8/14)

Part III A. Congress

- Part III has been re-ordered to bring together sections relating to each type of Congress: Ordinary, Extraordinary and Quadrennial to help with clarity.
- Art. 21 Continental Confederations and Member Groupings have the right the send non-voting delegates; this is now recognised in this section to provide consistency.
- Art. 22 Addition of Sec Gen as signatory for MF delegates, to reflect actual practice.
- Art. 31.1 & 31.2 Voting at Congress – it is intended to move to voting at congress by electronic means in future, however this is specifically noted in Swiss law and so provision must be made in case of a technical fault.

Articles with substantial or material changes, or new articles/clauses being proposed (9/14)

- **Art. 31.3 – Voting at Congress**

- This article was approved at Congress in 2023 under exceptional agreement due to the cancellation of a number of events during the pandemic. It is now being updated in the rule book.

Why?

It is included here because an update is proposed:

Replace 'Male' and 'Female' crews to Men's and Women's crews to reflect current WR terminology (the Eights are not fully male or female as the coxswain can be of either gender).

Articles with substantial or material changes, or new articles/clauses being proposed (10/14)

Part III B. Council

- **Art. 34 – The Council**
Addition of one Co-opted place on Council to allow for additional expertise and experience to be recruited to support broader range of subjects being considered at Council level.
- **Bye-law to Art. 35 – Election of Council Members**
Athlete Commission Chair election in appropriate place as it follows a different process set out in App. S5.
- **Art. 38 – Eligibility of Council Members.**
For candidates wishing to stand as President, Vice President or Treasurer they must have attended Congress or designated WR events “in person”.
- **Art. 38.2** – allow for requirement of integrity and due diligence information in Statutes.

Articles with substantial or material changes, or new articles/clauses being proposed (11/14)

Article 44 Commissions and Working Groups

- Updated name of this section to Commissions and Working Groups, to recognise and include the various project groups across WR and ensure they are bound by the same levels of integrity and compliance as commission members.
- Bye-Laws to Art. 44 minor updates requested by Commission Chairs to reflect their actual responsibilities, e.g. Coastal to support delivery of events; Indoor rowing to specifically cover virtual and e-rowing, data management etc;

Articles with substantial or material changes, or new articles/clauses being proposed (12/14)

- **Art 49.5 Duties of the Executive Committee**
- Addition of a new clause to recognise the current practice of using special advisors to complete tasks or projects for the Executive Committee

Why?

The Executive Committee has from time to time used external advisors to provide expertise and/or support capacity in delivering specific projects. This clause recognises them formally and ensures they are subject to the same accountability and compliance as others working with World Rowing.

Articles with substantial or material changes, or new articles/clauses being proposed (13/14)

- **Art.50 Executive Committee Meetings**

- Updated article to reflect current working practice and ensure that the outcomes are recorded and shared in a timely way.

Why?

During and since the pandemic, with the increased use of virtual meetings the Executive Committee have met up to twice a month. The previous timescales for the delivery of minutes were misaligned and it is suggested that circulation of ExCo decisions to Council should be more speedy.

Articles with substantial or material changes, or new articles/clauses being proposed (14/14)

- **Bye-Law to Art. 55 - Manipulation of Competition and Betting**
- Updated to include a definitions section; stipulate the standard of proof for Ethics Code extends to other decisions; include a provision for mutual recognition of decisions.
- **Art. 56 – Right of Complaint**
- ASOIF Governance Survey review advised WR to consider a separate **Complaints and Whistleblowing Policy**, to provide a robust and confidential process for concerns to be raised directly and managed fairly ensuring nobody who raises a complaint in good faith is disadvantaged or discriminated against. The published Policy is still on progress.
- **Bye-Law to Art. 54 – Ethical principles and Integrity Code of Ethics**
- Code of Ethics (App. S11) updated to ensure consistency with Art. 56, include as a breach reprisals for malicious complaints, and clarify procedures managed under statutes and Ethics Panel.